

THE PASTOR'S COLLEGE

OUTLINE OF
THE LORD'S WORK

1887-8.



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Annual paper concerning the
Lord's work in connection

A.C. Armstrong

✓ London, Pastors' college.

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CONCERNING
THE LORD'S WORK
IN CONNECTION WITH
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1887-88.



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The work of the College has for many years been adopted by the Church at the Tabernacle as its own. The accounts are examined with the accounts of the Church by auditors chosen by the Church, and are read and passed at the Annual Church-Meeting in the beginning of the year.

A Few Words from the President.

DURING another year we have diligently laboured on in the Pastors' College, and have found pleasure in the labour. The Lord has been mindful of us, and has accepted and prospered our work. It is more easy to think out and deliver twenty lectures, than to write one Report. The fact is, there is nothing to write about so long as all goes smoothly, tutors are in health, students are in sound working order, funds come in regularly, and openings are found for men when their term is over. This has been our happy portion throughout the year. Everything has gone well with us, and we can only say, "Bless the Lord"; and with hearty thanks assure our generous donors that we were never more attached to our College enterprise, and never more hopeful as to its results.

Yet we may, and even feel that we must, say that our staff of workers is a singularly able one. The Vice-president looks after the whole institution with a sleepless eye, and in a thousand ways, mentionable and unmentionable, keeps the little band in good marching order. He has to administer fatherly discipline and brotherly advice; and he does both with wonderful wisdom and patience. Mr. Gracey is graceful, accomplished, affectionate, commanding. All the men love and admire him, and they are right in so doing, for he lays himself out for their benefit, and he has something worth laying out. Our old friend, Mr. Fergusson, is all on fire with the desire to push on his young friends, and put into them an intense fervour for their holy work. Mr. Marchant is the third of the trio, and contributes his large information and deep experience to the common treasury. What these brethren have been to us during the last few months, and for many long years before, it is not in the power of our pen to write. Happily, whatever brawls disturb the street, we dwell in peace at home—yes, and much more than peace, for we are of one heart and of one soul. It is a mercy to have these leaders in their places, and able to fill them. We praise our God who has provided such admirable fellow-helpers. The grand old veteran, Rev. George Rogers, is yet flourishing, and his occasional presence always brings with it a gracious influence.

Mr. Cheshire most ably pursues his scientific lecturing, showing to his willing auditors that Nature is full of instruction, and that it supports the teaching of the Word of the Lord, so far as the material can corroborate the spiritual. Mr. Richardson perseveres with his voice-training, and many have been the improvements which he has produced in the speech and delivery of our young divines. He is a great acquisition to our staff. He aims at giving personal attention to each man in his own important department.

Mr. Johnson does not come into the College proper, but he steadily works on among the young men who seek education in the evening, and thus prepares valuable raw material for further development in the higher classes. This part of our work does not command such numbers of men as it used to do; but we trust the day will yet come when these golden opportunities will be eagerly seized upon. Any young man who

desires to serve the Lord, but feels a lack of education, can attend these classes without making any payment, and so can obtain valuable instruction. Associations of young men, aiming rather at amusement than instruction, may command approval during the present feverish hour ; but, in the long run, games of chance, and billiards, and all the favourites now so popular, will be found to be unprofitable to the mind, and sorry things to be provided by the church for the advantage of her sons. Then, we trust, the return to solid mental food will be enthusiastic and abiding.

Of students, we have had no lack. If we thought it wise to take them, we might increase the number four-fold. The quality of our present men is high ; above the average, and something more. No fellows could work more steadily, or show greater interest in their work. A fine tone and spirit have pervaded the whole body, and in adherence to the truth no man has wavered. Nothing has given us greater satisfaction than to see clear apprehension of truth, and firm grip of it in all the brethren. Very greatly have they been strengthened by those assaults upon the faith which apparently might have driven them from their standing. With nothing to bind them to the old orthodox faith but their own convictions, inwrought by the Spirit of God, they have been firm as the mountains about Jerusalem. Young men are young men, and there are faults, of course, in us all ; but if we never had more trial of patience than we have had this year from our students, we should go singing all the way to heaven. A holy and prayerful spirit has been dominant among us, and this has produced honest plodding at the studies.

Vacancies in our churches are comparatively few, but we have our fair share of applications for men ; so that twelve have settled over pastorates in England. Feeling that the world is our parish, and not the narrow territory of the United Kingdom, we rejoice that so many representatives of the Pastors' College are working abroad. We have added to this number, during the year, six men, two of whom have gone to the United States, one to China, one to the Congo, another to St. Helena, and the sixth to Port Stanley, Falkland Islands.

It is an honour to have a good detachment of men in the Mission field. Our reports from them are very hopeful. They are a solid, resolute, reliable body of men, and are working on in downright earnest. Names most dear to their brethren are among them. May precious life be spared, health be granted, and the divine blessing be abundantly bestowed !

We believe that our brethren in Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand are proving themselves the men for the place and the time. We question if any body of ministers is doing more than they are to extend the kingdom of our Lord Jesus. The same may be said of our workers in South Africa. These Colonial pioneers complain greatly of the want of a Colonial Society to aid them. The Congregationalists do much for these rising empires, and the Baptists do nothing. It is certainly a sad oversight, or a sad penury, which prevents any denomination from nursing the young churches which are formed in new settlements by the members who have left the old house at home.

We have been able, in several cases, to pay the passage money of the outgoing minister, but we have no funds for anything beyond: we wish we had.

In the States and Canada our numerous brethren are distinguished by real work and success. Many of them have been the pioneers of the advancing hosts which are subduing the West to civilization, and to church life. We think of those who were once our boys, who are now fathers in Israel, and the tears stand in our eyes.

Our Evangelists have done splendid service to the churches of Christ during another year. Messrs. Fullerton and Smith are our Moody and Sankey; and we do not use the name playfully, for they are in all respects worthy to rank with those two servants of the Lord. Immense crowds usually gather about them. Their testimony is clear gospel, cleansed from all sensationalism and novelty of doctrine. We have given no detailed account of their work this year; it is before the world. We have given space to the less known brethren of our staff.

Messrs. Burnham and Harmer have gone out singly, and to smaller audiences have testified the same Gospel with delightful results. We are far from wishing to make tables of results, but we feel assured that no agency for winning souls has been more largely blest than their evangelistic labour.

Mr. Eyres has been aided by us in a Children's Mission, which has been a great blessing in many places. He has now left us for Mission work in China. God bless him!

Messrs. Mateer and Parker, after going round the world preaching and singing Christ, have parted company. Mr. Mateer will be glad of a pastorate; Mr. Parker is working through America.

Mr. Carter, Mr. Tait, and Mr. Hill have also worked this year under our Evangelistic flag, and will probably come more distinctly into our working ranks. Mr. Chamberlain has rendered memorable help in sacred song. Altogether, the labours of our Evangelists are a theme for grateful song, and a stimulus to the more fervent offering of the prayer that the Lord may send more labourers into his harvest. Judging that it would interest our subscribers to see what two of our workers are doing, we asked Mr. Burnham and Mr. Harmer to write accounts of their work, and these will be found further on.

From the commencement of the College we have gone upon the lines of definite doctrine, and we have left no question as to what that doctrine is. In the case of every man admitted to the College, a belief in sound doctrine has been a chief requisite. In other ways our witness is clear enough, and leaves no excuse for men dishonest enough to creep in among us, and steal an education from those whose doctrines they detest. The Weekly Sermon has spoken more than two thousand times, and its voice has not been yea and nay, but one unvarying testimony to the great fundamentals of the old orthodox faith. So far as has been in the power of mortal man, the doctrines of grace and the grand teaching of the cross have been inculcated by us incessantly in the pulpit and by the the press, in the church and in the College. Our hope and belief was that the ministers who went forth from the Pastors' College would remain true to the faith once delivered to the saints. The torrents of error

which are now rushing around the foundations of the Church are so tremendous, that we could not expect every man to stand. Among so many, there would unavoidably be a few who would be carried off their feet, and here and there one who would joyfully commit himself to the current because he had always been wavering. The testing time came ; we will not repeat the details so well known by our friends ; but when the crisis was past, we found ourselves rejoicing that the vast majority of our brethren were not only firm, but enthusiastic in their attachment to the old truth. It was heart-breaking work to find a few in heart and speech bitterly opposed ; but this we could bear more easily than to find good men and true siding with those whose errors they disavowed. They desired to be in fellowship with those whose wanderings they deplored. Of course this meant that they would sooner part from the orthodox many than quit the heterodox few, though they would greatly have preferred that the alternative had never been proposed to them. These brethren we conceive to be following a very wrong course in this matter ; but it is a great comfort to us to hope and believe that they are themselves preaching the gospel, and earnest in their hope that others will be brought back to do the same. Still, our Conference roll has been shortened ; but we can hardly tell how much ; for even up to the hour of writing brethren are returning to us. In a little while the mists will roll away, we shall know each other better, and be knit together in a surer union than ever.

To us it was an imperative necessity that we should have no fellowship with Universalists and other parties of the New School of doctrine ; and at a painful cost deliverance has been wrought for those in our Conference who cannot side with the false doctrine. The bolder utterances and firmer faith of those who remain true believers in the Vicarious Sacrifice make up a grand set-off against the loss which we have sustained. Henceforth we have one faith as well as one Lord and one baptism. A sense of freedom from an alien element restores a confidence in each other which was beginning to depart from us. What we need is a new anointing from on high. Oh, that we may receive it during the Conference gatherings of this year ! Come, Holy Spirit, and baptize us anew into thyself, and into fire !

Friends will be glad to know that, in the matter of funds, we have been safely carried through another year. He who called us to this work has supplied us, and will supply us in all necessities even unto the end. Many of our largest helpers have gone to their rest, and we shall be right glad if others will take their places. A few in great bitterness of controversy have withdrawn their support, and have sent in little doses of wormwood and gall instead of silver and gold. We acknowledge their right to do as they think right ; but we shall not feel bound to close our doors because we have lost their favours. What we have done is better judged of by the Lord than by them. Already we have had ample proof that all losses will be doubly made up. The Lord has willing servants where we little look for them. He may find for this school of the prophets some Obadiah, who will care for the prophets of the Lord, or some "great woman" like the Shunammite of old, who will

look tenderly upon the Lord's cause and foster it. Assuredly, to help young preachers to study the Scriptures and become more efficient ministers, is one of the noblest works that ever moved the heart of man. We do not make preachers, that is the work of the Holy Spirit alone; we only try to aid those whom the Lord has already called. To this our life is devoted, and we therefore have no hesitation in asking others to devote their substance to so good an object.

Vice-President's Report.

WITH more than usual satisfaction I can report upon the past session's studies. The health of the men has been good and the average of work higher. A devout spirit prevails in the College, and all, with varied talents, are animated with one desire, faithfully to avail themselves of the opportunities afforded them, to prepare for their great and glorious calling as preachers of the Gospel of the Grace of God. There is nothing new to report. No new truths are taught, and the old ones are as dear as ever; and our methods of teaching, though varied to meet each batch of men admitted, are yet substantially the same. The "spirit of the age" is not substituted by us for the Spirit of God; and, so far as I can judge, the young men are not anxious for us to make this change. No spray of the blighting waves of "modern thought" has beaten over our ramparts to the injury of our students, and we desire to be spared its withering influence. In the old strength we march to the old strains of praise, long the old paths, and enter animated with the old hopes, upon another year.

JAMES A. SPURGEON.

Mr. Gracey's Report.

IT is with very great thankfulness I once more write an Annual Report. Generally speaking, the past has been a year of "patient continuance in well doing." It will be cheering to the many friends of the College in this and other lands to know that it is in a thoroughly healthy and vigorous condition, and fulfilling well the purpose for which it was at first founded. If any change has taken place, it has been a renewing of its youth in the spirit of prayer, in zeal for the conversion of souls, in attachment to the vital truths of the Gospel, and in Evangelistic and pioneering work in many directions. It is satisfactory also to say that these aims and qualifications in our brethren have been met by an answering goodwill and appreciation on the part of the churches.

As brethren have been ready to "settle," open doors have been found for them through the spontaneous choice of the churches exercising their freedom and independence. Not the slightest solicitation or appeal has been used to obtain invitations to preach. Deacons and churches have first come to us, and in this spontaneous goodwill

of our free churches, we make our glory and boast. It is our continual effort, as a College, to deserve this confidence of the churches better; and I can freely testify to the laborious industry of the students to equip themselves as worthy candidates for the responsible office of the pastorate.

During the year I resumed my course of Lectures on Systematic Theology, besides using the admirable handbook of Dr. Hodge in a separate class. Other classes have been engaged in the study of Homiletics, Church History, and Trench's Synonyms of the Greek Testament. In the Greek Testament itself our subjects have been the Epistles to the Galatians and Ephesians, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Gospel according to John. In Classics the senior men have been reading Sophocles' *Œdipus Tyrannus*, the XIIIth Book of the *Iliad*, Plato's *Phædo*, the VIth Book of the *Annals* of Tacitus. Cicero's 1st Oration against Catiline, and Augustine's *De Doctrinâ Christianâ*. In Hebrew we have had selected sections from Genesis, Joshua, Isaiah, the Psalms, and minor Prophets. The Discussion Class, comprising the whole College, in which a great variety of topics is handled, has been doing good service in training the brethren in debate and in ready impromptu speech. I cannot conclude without mentioning the great regularity of attendance and conscientious diligence which have been maintained during the year. The spirit of cordiality and unanimity prevailing throughout the College, and uniting all in one great purpose, has made the work as pleasant as it is, full of promise for the future, and of assurance for the present that the gracious Spirit of God is dwelling in our midst.

DAVID GRACEY.

President's Note.

IT is my part to take the whole of the men on Friday afternoons, and then our plan is to expound Scripture, lecture upon a topic useful to the pastorate or the pulpit, give the sketch of some great worker, or a reading from some eminent author. We spend two very happy hours together, and get over a good deal of ground in a year.

After the class is over, my duty is to hear the men's accounts of where they have preached, and where they are asked to settle; also to hear of destitute localities where the gospel is needed, and of efforts which are commenced for taking the Word of the Lord to them. When I have seen from a dozen to twenty brethren in succession, and heard their desires, aspirations, and discouragements, I sometimes feel that a long morning's preparation, two hours' lecturing, and two hours' private advice, take as much out of a man as he can spare for one day. Nevertheless, the labour is most pleasant, since everybody is hearty, and all are anxious to do what is best for the glory of God. In this spirit the joy of the Lord is our strength.

Mr. Fergusson's Report.

ANOTHER year of College work is closed. Again is come the time for asking such questions as—What work has been done?

How has it been done? And what is its aim? The nature of the work in my department may be judged by the following list of its studies:—1. English, its Grammar, its Composition written and spoken; and English History. 2. Philosophy, including Logic and Metaphysics. 3. Ethics, as taught by Butler and Wayland. 4. Scripture Knowledge, as taught in Angus's Hand-Book of the Bible. The most of this comes in at the first stage of a man's College course, and means hard grinding for him at a time when his habits of study are not yet formed. Yet to this grinding he owes his future.

How has the work been done? Well and faithfully in each branch, and by every man in my different classes. Thoroughness, enthusiasm, and steadiness have been with us all the year round; and we are pleased to have this opportunity of publicly awarding to all a meed of well-earned praise. No year has passed over us more suggestive of future usefulness in the vineyard of Christ.

A NOTABLE POINT.

A coming struggle in the Church of God is often foreshadowed in the College Class-room of the theological student. It was said that the Reformation in Europe made its first appearance in the monk's cell and amid the throes of Luther's soul. In the churches of these lands there is a struggle fast approaching, a struggle between the Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ and the ravings and dreams of the new theology; and tremors of it have already made themselves felt in every College throughout the country, giving rise to searchings of heart among students preparing for the sacred office of the ministry. Of course Satan would delight to remove from the true faith every professed teacher of the Word of the living God. He craftily begins early with the schools of the prophets, and he does so with all such schools. Our College in this respect is not an exception.

Perhaps it might relieve the monotony of our Report to mention the effect of the Down-grade controversy on the religious life of the thoughtful student, so far as we have observed it.

It has created an intense desire for efficiency in preaching the Old Gospel.

The rough handling which its wholly inspired and eternal truths have received from the would-be leaders of religious thought, has provoked among the students a strong desire, in every way, to understand and fathom their meaning, that they may more perfectly expound them unto perishing men. They have resolved to know what this Gospel really is, and to what it leads. To accomplish this, the men subject almost every syllable of the sacred text and context wherein these reviled truths are set forth to a crucial criticism, and with this result—they stand out before their minds with such clearness of definition as to deepen their

former belief in their divine origin and complete inspiration. They rise from the task of examination, conscious of having in their possession a heritage of holy facts, and a wealth of spiritual doctrine. They rejoice in mountains of eternal verity, compared with which the New Theology is as the land of mist and marsh.

The noise of the Down-grade battle has led our students to seek for increased assurance and certainty in preaching the Gospel. This they seek to attain by subjecting the vilified truths of revelation to another kind of test, namely, that of discovering the results of preaching them to the people—preaching them in their purity, separated from every trick and wile of the New School. They watch anxiously to see whether these truths do indeed turn men from sin to God. A conversion is a corroboration of the doctrines which they preach. They compare notes with brethren long out in the field, and celebrated as soul-winners. They examine for themselves the outcome of the work of these men, to see what fruit the tree of the gospel is bearing. They are amazed at the vigour and freshness of spiritual life which prevail among those who feed upon sound doctrine; and they are glad as they see the solidity of their piety, and their firmness in the faith. Doctrines which build up such men are not to be despised. They rejoice in the purified lives of notorious sinners converted to God, they look hopefully upon those who crowd the enquiry-rooms of their spheres of labour. To the Student's question—"How do you account for these results?" the invariable response in every case is—"By simply preaching those truths, nothing but those truths, and all of those truths that are now spurned and cast out by the New Theology." If its apostles could witness the recoil expressed in look, word, and act of these young men, as they contrast with all this gracious result the empty benches of the modern synagogues, they might learn that their vain-glorious boasts are not quite so universally received as they suppose. We wish they could see the abhorrence on the countenance of these young men after comparing the results of the gospel of free and sovereign grace with the philosophical tinkering and tailoring of the Broad School. We feel certain they would not be quite so sure that the ball is at their feet, or the game so nearly won.

The coming struggle is increasing among our students an intenser spirit of consecration to the person of the Lord Jesus. The almost blasphemous utterances against the name of Jesus, and the coarse liberties of expression towards his sacred person, which are common in these days, shock the devout, and urge them to intense resolve to wipe away the dishonour. In our simplicity we believe Jesus to be the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, and our students are of the same mind. To them there appears no change in their Redeemer. They believe him still to be God and man, and on his sacred substitutionary work they rest their hopes of their personal salvation, and that of their hearers. When they hear of a preacher saying, "I will never preach the doctrine of the shambles, the dogma of the butcher's slab," they first grow indignant, and next they determine to cleave to their Lord and Master with a tenderer love than ever. They remember the agony of Gethsemane,

and the sufferings of Calvary, where the Lord of glory poured out his soul an offering for sin, and they loathe the teaching which makes light of the punishment of sin, and Christ's bearing of it in the sinner's stead. For the life of them they cannot think, as do the New Theologians, that to believe and preach that Jesus bore the sins of men, and that his righteousness is imputed to believers, is "unjust or immoral." We would say to these revilers of the doctrine of salvation by substitution: Be not deceived, your fallacies have utterly failed, so far as we have observed, to alter or disturb by one atom, in one single student, the solemn convictions of his soul with regard to his Lord's atoning work. No, the enemies of the old faith do not succeed: all godly students and ministers feel their love fanned to a greater heat by the efforts made to lower the glory of the cross. The audacious advances of false teachers have called upon them to close up their ranks around the person of their divine Saviour. They have done so with firmness and enthusiasm. Opposition has made the Master and his service even more sacred in their eyes, so that each longs to be a devotee of Christ. As the offence of the cross has not ceased, neither has enthusiastic attachment to it come to an end.

The coming struggle is increasing the conviction that, unaided by the methods of the New Theology, the Gospel, as taught by Christ and the Apostles, is, in every way, adequate to cope with and cure all the ills of the souls of fallen men. The New School teaches that God's Gospel is becoming antiquated. They declare that, single-handed, it is incapable of attracting the masses, and that it has failed, when left to itself, to satisfy the needs of the present hour. To assist, improve, and put vigour into this paralyzed Gospel of the Almighty, new methods of aiding it are suggested. We feel ashamed to mention them, because of their frivolity, or worse. It seems as if the church were borrowing from the theatre its masks and buskins; from the music-hall, its songs and comic recitations; from the tavern, its billiards and games of chance; and from the casino, its dances, posturings, and tableaux vivants. We have heard so many things of this sort that we often say—What next? and What next?

It is a sickening story: for very shame we will go no further into detail. The New Religion comes to us in the cast-off clothes of the world's mummers, propping itself up with silly amusements, and courting popularity by pandering to the cravings of an age which loves entertainments, and thirsts after novelties.

Once more do we wish the apostles of the New Theology could mark the loathing and disgust with which true men regard this substitute for spiritual religion. They ask—Can any Gospel be made attractive and effective, far less the Gospel of God's grace, by being allied with the frothy levity of the free-and-easy, the instruments of the gambler, and the paint and millinery of the green room? They wonderingly ask: Did such artifices ever win a soul for Jesus? Are they winning them now? Will such rubbish ever save a soul, even with eternity to do it in? Their manliness, their common sense, and their piety, come to their aid. They turn their backs on the flippant invention, and refuse to preach a Gospel which depends for attractions upon the puppets of a show.

Doubly dear, in their esteem, has this terrible sight made the grand old Gospel of Jesus with "its artless unencumbered plan"—Believe and Live. And as they look upon its grand provision for the helpless sinner, they bow their hearts before it, and denounce all others as vanities and lies.

The coming struggle is fostering among our students a spirit of complete reliance on the Holy Spirit's help for true success. The utter failure of all these new methods to attract or retain men within the reach of the Gospel, their utter failure to keep up in the Church a healthy Christianity, and to furnish a continuous stream of fresh blood in the form of new converts, is manifest to all. Although managed and administered by men of solid learning, splendid ability, and consummate tact, this new Gospel and these wretched methods do not succeed. What then? We who do not possess the mental might of these new Theologians, what shall we do? We are thrown back on this question—Are these new methods and these administrative abilities the chief sources of ministerial strength? We believe that there is no power for good in them at all. A voice from heaven tells us, "Not by might, nor by power, but my Spirit, saith the Lord." Are precious talents of mind to be despised? Far from it: let them be put in their proper place, and let them become ministering angels in the saving of men. But the Holy Spirit is the cause of prosperity throughout the Church of God in all its spiritual work. Natural gifts are but his tools. The Spirit in the minister of God imparts to him that spiritual life and fulness which make him to pour forth from his soul rivers of living water, which flood with abiding life and endless fruitfulness the entire area of his ministry. The Spirit working with him gives unction to his words and fire to his heart for his altar service; but it is the Holy Spirit who is the true source and fountain of it all, and to him must it all be ascribed. That we are driven to trust more in him than ever, is a blessed result from a very evil condition of things, and unto God be all the glory!

A. FERGUSSON.

Mr. Marchant's Report.

DURING the past year, the ordinary course of study has been pursued in the classes under my care. The results have, I think, been quite up to the average. Perhaps, lately, we have had rather an unusual amount of sickness, the sudden changes of the winter trying some of the brethren severely.

The usual elementary work in Latin and Greek has been done in the junior classes. Two or more books of Euclid have been read by many of the students, while others are proceeding with Book I. In Greek, Xenophon's *Anabasis*, Lucian's *Dialogues*, the Gospel by Mark, with the Epistle to the Philippians, and the First Epistle of John, have furnished subjects for different classes. In Latin, Eutropius, Cæsar, Nepos, and Virgil's *Bucolics* and *Æneid* have been studied. Arnold's Greek and Latin Exercises have also been translated. I think somewhat more ground than usual has been covered by the classical studies of the year, and the work has been, for the most part, carefully and conscientiously performed. To me, personally, the toil of the year has been heavier than usual, and while it has been a pleasant relief to the care which God has suffered to come to me in my home, I cannot but thankfully acknowledge the kindness and tender sympathy of the brethren during a period of sore trial. The Lord remember it to each for good in the day of his own adversity.

Whatever departures there may be outside the College from the faith generally received among us, I very gladly bear my testimony to the conviction that within the Institution we are of one heart and of one mind. I do not know of a single student who has shown any sympathy at any time with what is regarded as the New Theology. On the other hand, very hearty have been the prayers for the President throughout this controversy. The solemn conviction that some such action as that which he has taken was absolutely necessary, while general among us from the first, has evidently deepened in intensity as the discussion has proceeded. May God overrule the whole of this grave discussion for good throughout all the Churches, and even in the world beyond !

F. G. MARCHANT.

Mr. Cheshire's Report.

OUR work during the past year has been continued upon the old lines. Our object is to utilize the facts made known by science as illustrations of spiritual truth, so that the parables of nature may be ever ready at the preacher's hand. I have personally received much encouragement by many of the brethren, now away in their pastorates, stating how valuable they have found our work to be to them in their pulpit ministrations.

During our study of God's working in nature, there often comes the deep hush, born of reverence, as we realize how inexpressibly grand are the revelations of measureless power and infinite understanding, which even the visible universe can bring home to us. Thus we often realize with David that though the stars are silent, yet, to the spiritual man, their voice has gone out into all the earth ; and further, that though science may by some be accounted destructive of the foundation of our faith, and the propagator of a soul-withering materialism, yet, when accompanied by the true wisdom, she is but the revealer of the delightful truth that "He is not far from every one of us," and that "in him we live, and move, and have our being." In this use of science have we not the example of our Lord and King, the prince of teachers ? For he brought before his hearers such science as they could realize ; and made the budding lily, and the growing corn, exponents of truths concerning his kingdom.

This year has embraced a physiological course, in which we have been greatly helped by the acquisition of Marshall's large and admirable diagrams, which have been purchased out of my annual grant towards maintaining our apparatus in efficient condition. To these have been added illustrations in the way of simple dissections.

Light, heat, and sound have occupied a good deal of our time. We have now added to our lantern a very excellent polariscope, which will not only be of extreme value in bringing before the class those most fascinating experiments in connection with the polarization of light, but will be of general service in giving to the brethren an opportunity of repeating these experiments before public gatherings. For this purpose the magic lantern, which has intentionally a very portable form, has been a long time in use, and now to this the polariscope will give novelty and variety, without adding much to its weight in transit. I shall be glad to hear from brethren who could avail themselves of the assistance which I thus suggest.

During the year we have also acquired a pseudoscope, which, by reversing the shadows of any object under observation, gives a totally wrong impression of its form, *e.g.* the inside of a saucer appears the outside, the outside of a spoon the inside, and so on, showing that our knowledge of form depends not only on the eye, but on judgment, the latter requiring educating ; and so, to me, appearing to explain the curious

fact of the blind man when restored to sight seeing men "as trees walking." The microscope is, as heretofore, used during the tea hour on Friday, and, as an instrument of education, is of no small service, while the pleasure which it gives is abundantly evident.

Our attendance is good, and the interest in our work remains unabated.

F. CHESHIRE.

Report of the Evening Classes.

OUR past year's work has been steady, and much progress has been made in each department of study. The young men have shown a very laudable desire to profit by the lectures given, and thus to fit themselves for more efficient service for the Master. Many of them are engaged in Evangelistic work, and several desire eventually to enter the Ministry.

I am glad to be able to testify that they are all in deep sympathy with our Pastor in his defence of the Truth; that they are earnest Bible students, praying for the anointing of the Holy Spirit; and intensely desirous of winning souls for Christ.

Much attention has been given to the study of Theology and Mental Science.

The Elementary Greek Class has studied the "Initia Græca," and the Advanced Class has also been reading John's Gospel.

Lectures have been given on the History and Literature of the "Age of Anne."

In English Grammar, Etymology has been specially treated.

In Roman History, the period studied has been from the Punic Wars to the death of Cæsar.

Good work has also been done in the Shorthand Class.

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

College Home Visiting Society.

By C. H. SPURGEON.

IT struck me that it would be a double blessing if the students set to work to visit the dwellers in our neighbourhood—they would bless themselves and those they visited. Accordingly, the brethren organized themselves, mapped out the district, and proceeded in couples to visit the whole region, house by house. Mr. Rumsey became the Secretary, and the brethren became the visitors. Furnished with sermons, they went forth at such hours as their incessant studies left open for such holy service; and the result has been to themselves, at least, most beneficial. Some did little more than leave the sermon at first, but in many cases they grew bolder on each occasion, and we doubt not that this year they will all manage personal conversations with readiness. To some this is an art only to be acquired by practice. In every instance the visitation has been instructive to the visitor. Now the men see what they will have to deal with as pastors. Visiting will not henceforth be strange work to them. Their love for souls has been stirred up. They are learning how to speak to individuals about their souls; they are acquiring a hunger for conversions. God will bless this humble effort to themselves.

As to the persons visited, there can be no doubt that many of them have come to the Tabernacle services as the result of the invitations, and it will be seen in days to come how many have heard the Word of the Lord to their eternal salvation. The Secretary of the movement deserves special commendation: he did his work well. He will make a fine organizer in his future career. Here is his report:—

“It is with heartfelt thankfulness to God that we here present the First Annual Report in connection with our work of Home Visitation. Thankfulness, because of the great privilege afforded us in thus being permitted to sow beside all waters. Thankfulness also, because of the evident blessing which has attended our sowing. The importance of the work to which we have put our hands cannot be over-estimated. When we think for a moment of the teeming masses around us, living in utter neglect of God, in open violation of his laws, and regardless of their souls’ eternal welfare, our work assumes an aspect of the gravest importance. Many of these are the souls for whom Christ died. Yet how are they to be reached? They do not come to God’s house; there is but one way left, *we must go to them*. With this thought in our minds, we have gone forth, bearing the precious word of eternal life, seeking by all possible means to commend the gospel of the grace of God. Our plan of working has been simple, yet efficient.

“In apostolic order, our brethren have gone forth in pairs, and have thus mutually encouraged each other in the work. This method was adopted on account of the immorality which abounds in some of the districts visited. We are glad to report that cases of direct opposition have been but few. The greatest difficulty with which our brethren have to

contend, is the stolid indifference of the people to divine things. Nevertheless, again and again, their hearts have been cheered by the warm welcome given, and the readiness with which the sermons were received. All the brethren report concerning these sermons, that they were gladly accepted, and the people seemed grateful for them. The mention of our beloved President's name obtained, in many cases, a ready hearing for the brethren. There is abundant evidence to show that in the hearts of the common people the name of our President is revered and treasured. During the year, our brethren have worked 47 districts, visited 2,121 houses, 3,777 families, and distributed 4,027 sermons.

"In addition to the general work undertaken, special efforts have been put forth. The public-houses have not been forgotten. It is cheering to note from the reports of the brethren concerning this special work, that they received uniform kindness from the landlords, who not only tolerated them, but expressed their pleasure at their visits ; whilst among the customers before the bar, they found many who readily received the books. To the sick and infirm, some of our brethren have been able to minister consolation, and frequent opportunities have been afforded for the reading of the Scriptures and prayer. Our President gave us a liberal supply of sermons, in an attractive book form, most suitable for distribution. Inside the covers of these books is to be found a kindly word to the reader, and a hearty invitation to attend the Tabernacle services. Thus the seed of the kingdom finds its way into the hands and homes, and we trust, into the hearts of the people, to whom we pray it may prove a blessing. The benefit is by no means confined to those who are visited. The visitor himself derives much good. Experience gained by intercourse with a vast variety of characters and disposition is most valuable ; a knowledge of human nature is thus obtained which could be acquired nowhere else. In this work are to be found the means whereby the servant of God may qualify himself for the highest of all callings, viz., a soul-winner for his Master. The brethren regret that College duties leave them so little time for the work. Nevertheless, they are willing to do what they can. In closing this brief account of our work, we make one request : 'Brethren, pray for us.' In humble dependence upon the Holy Spirit, our brethren go forth, bearing the precious seed, fully accepting the divine assurance, that presently they shall return rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them."

Impressions of one who has just left the College.

IT would be as difficult to prevent a child from talking about his happy home, or a soldier from speaking of his gallant regiment, as to deter one who has just said farewell to the Pastors' College from referring to his Alma Mater. As one who but a day or two since left the dear old place, my mind naturally reverts to her walls, and my lingering thought here finds an utterance. I think no student ever forgets the first day of College life. The hopes and fears, the aspirations and the wonderings as to the future, added to the novelty of the whole experience, go to impress it indelibly upon the mind. Personally I may say, that lessons of humility and of determination were learned on that day, and on many succeeding ones. Somehow or other, those powers which I had mentally invested with some degree of importance assumed smaller proportions as the days passed by; and I discovered that I was even as other men: possibly less than most—certainly not more. To-day I thank God for the discovery, and I believe that it was the prophecy of any progress I may have made since.

As students, we all found on entering the Pastors' College, that if we desired idleness we had certainly turned our steps in the wrong direction. The various classes afforded full scope for untiring energies and indomitable perseverance. The matter ever urged even upon the most advanced was, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after." Yes, we had plenty of real hard study, whether in the classes for Logic and Metaphysics with Professor Fergusson, or under Professor Marchant with Cæsar and Xenophon, or taking our loftier flights in the pleasures of Tacitus and Plato, not forgetting Theology, Greek Testament, and Hebrew, with Principal Gracey. I do not think we minded the toil; and if then we were not so grateful for it all as we should have been, I believe we are now becoming more thankful every day.

However, we sometimes felt fagged out towards the end of the week, but a few helpful words from the Vice-President and a bracing talk from the President on the Friday afternoon, coupled with the College prayer-meeting in the evening, nerved us for further struggle. Those occasions have often been the means of renewing our strength and of relieving the weighted wings of our spirits. Is it the experience of most students? I know not whether it is so or not; but, sometimes, I have been in danger of forgetting the great end of my student life: in the study itself there have been times when the keen edge of my spiritual life has seemed turned and blunted, when the constant association with books and themes, bearing directly or indirectly upon religious matters, has appeared to dull and deaden the soul's sensibilities to the influence of spiritual things. At such times the stirring words of the President and

the prayers of the evening meeting have often been used to bring the Master of our spirits near, and I have entered into the meaning of those words :—

“ We touch Him in life's throng and press,
And we are whole again.”

Reviewing the past, my heart is filled with gratitude for all the help I have received in my spiritual life, by my association with the Pastors' College. It might have been otherwise had there not been every incentive towards a holier walk and a fuller consecration to the service of Christ. One often feels that the Christ of the Schools is not the same as He who sat at Samaria's well, and who suffered on Calvary ; that sometimes the Rose of Sharon seems marred and crushed by the rough hands of polemic gladiators ; but to-day I remember with joy the wise counsels to guard jealously our personal piety by communion and study of Scripture, and I think also of the opportunities for preaching the Gospel, when oftentimes the Divine presence was felt, ay, and known too, by the hearts of hearers touched and lives transformed.

In all our studies the tutors appealed to the highest possible motives. We were not urged to our work on the ground of scholastic attainments, but from the loftier motive of equipment for the ministry of Christ, and usefulness in his Kingdom. Thus were we helped in our inner lives, and the Saviour became more real to us than he might otherwise have been.

I presume it is quite a pardonable offence, but we always considered our tutors the very best in the world ; and it is only truth to say that all the present students hold precisely the same view. Of course the three tutors differ in temperament, which it is only reasonable to expect, since they represent the three countries of the United Kingdom ; but they are grand men ; and how far their teaching and characters have gone to mould the thought and life and ministry of the students who have passed under their influence, who can say ?

And so in their classes, and under the instructions of Professor Cheshire in Science, and Professor Richardson in Elocution, my time has passed. These four happy years have sped, forming a bright and glad retrospect, leaving me thankful for the real, hearty brotherhood that has ever existed amongst us as students, and for the love which made us all one. This has ever been characteristic of the men of our College, and it is hoped and believed that the time will never come when the ties of a common salvation and of a conquering cause will be less binding than they are to-day.

And now, in anticipating my future work, for which the college course has so greatly helped me, I thank Heaven that the pathway leading to the active service of our Lord has been so cheery and so sunlit as the past student years have proved ; and I ask your prayers for what has been to so many a very gate of Heaven, the Pastors' College.

Evangelistic Notes.

BY J. BURNHAM.

CONCERNING God's gifts to the church, Paul writes, "He gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers." There is evidently a distinct line of service for the evangelist; and he takes too much for granted who supposes that the pastoral office includes the evangelistic. That there are men who combine in themselves the qualifications for both pastor and evangelist, is beyond dispute; but these are the exception, not the rule. This distinct qualification Paul recognized in Timothy, and hence charged him, "Do the work of an evangelist." This same charge was thrust upon me, ten years ago, in a rather strange way. I had spent three years in very happy work in a rural pastorate in Somerset; loving both my work and my flock. Suddenly prostrated, as the result of overwork, reason threatened to forsake her throne. The physician ordered immediate cessation from study, and six months' rest. Mrs. Spurgeon heard of this, and wrote one of her sweet, cheery letters, in which, with remarkable prescience, she foretold my future: "Don't be discouraged because unable to interpret God's dealings; it may be by *this* means he is opening before you a wider sphere of usefulness."

Feeling it would be unjust to the little church to hold on officially when incapacitated for work, I at once resigned, not knowing where next a door would open.

Of a naturally restless disposition, inactivity became burdensome. As soon as strength would permit, and knowing what ministerial isolation meant, I began visiting brethren in country places, and holding special services. At first, these took the form of "Evenings of Sacred Song," interspersed with brief gospel addresses; but they soon grew into more distinctly evangelistic services, and were blest beyond my most sanguine expectations. Tidings of the work reached Mr. Spurgeon, and at the following College Conference (1878), when I was fully restored to health, and seeking another settlement, he embodied Mrs. Spurgeon's prophecy in the charge of Paul to Timothy, "Do the work of an evangelist." After a fortnight's consideration and prayer over the matter, I accepted the charge, and have had abundant proof, since then, that the step was divinely ordered.

Now, for the information of kind friends and supporters, I am asked for a *short report*.

TEN YEARS OF EVANGELISTIC WORK

is a big text for a brief sketch, and I feel considerable difficulty in attempting the task; the difficulty is *not* what to *say*, but what to *leave unsaid*. As one result of long and varied experience, I would first bear unfaltering testimony to the

SOLE SUFFICIENCY OF THE GOSPEL

for this kind of work; *the gospel*, as received, believed, and handed down to us by our fathers. Here is a noteworthy fact, and a splendid tribute to the power and sufficiency of the *old-fashioned gospel*. Men who have nearly emptied their chapels by speculative theology, and feel

that they have lost their hold of the people, when they desire special services in order to recover lost ground, invariably (I was about to say, "instinctively"—perhaps so!) seek the help of those who abide by the old lines of thought and expression, rather than that of men of so-called "modern thought." This unintentional tribute we gratefully accept, fully persuaded, from experience and observation, that nothing beneath the sun will meet man's deepest need as the gospel will. We would say of it as David said of Goliath's sword, "There is none like that, give it me." This is

THE GOSPEL FOR THE AGED.

True, there are very few conversions among the grey-headed; but, blessed be God, we are not without witnesses to the power of the gospel on men who have passed their "three-score years and ten."

On one occasion, resting a few days with a farmer friend, on the Cotswold Hills, I yielded to his entreaty for an open-air service in the evening. Tidings went round the hay-fields, and a goodly number gathered on the Green. Next morning the farmer came in, leaving with me his old shepherd, in great distress, for a little counsel and prayer. I asked, "How long have you been so distressed?" He replied, "Do you remember, sir, having a service on the Green, about six weeks ago? What I heard then very much troubled me, and caused me many restless nights; but I kept it all to myself. Last night, sir, the word so broke my heart, I have not slept all night; I could not keep quiet any longer; so, in the hay-field I told master all about it this morning."

"What are you troubled about, shepherd?"

"I want to know whether you think God can save an *old* sinner like I am, who has forgotten him all these years?"

"It matters little what *I think*, shepherd; let us see what *God says* (turning to Heb. vii. 25): 'He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him'; '*to the uttermost*,' shepherd; that means the *oldest*, as well as the *vilest*, sinner." Then came an excuse rather common in rural districts: "I haven't had any education, and I can't understand these things like learned people can." I replied, "If 'tis a question of scholarship, then it is about time you commenced your education! No, no, shepherd; thousands have gone to heaven with no more education than you have; and thousands are going to-day, who can no more read or write their names than you can" (Here the old man's face lit up with hope, and I proceeded). "The matter is very simple. You go to yonder shop, and day by day get goods, putting off payment till you are deep in debt. Passing your door some weeks later, I observe you standing there with a very distressed look, and ask the meaning of it. Drawing from your pocket a bill, you exclaim, 'Here's a bill from Brown's for £10, and I have not 10d. with which to pay it!' Producing a receipted account, I say, 'Cheer up, shepherd! I heard of your trouble, and have called and *paid the debt for you*.' Would you not be glad?"

"Indeed, I *should*, sir."

"And how much education would you need in order to trust me?"

"Why I could trust you without any education! Couldn't I?"

“Just so, shepherd : you and I are the debtors ; but Jesus *paid the debt for us.*” Turning to Isaiah, I read, ‘*He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities : the chastisement of our peace was upon him ; and with his stripes we are healed.*’ Are not you glad he has *paid the debt for you, shepherd ?*”

Poor old man ! on his knees he went, and thanked God for making it so plain to an old sinner. Then, hurrying to the fields, he took his master with a grip of the hand, as the great tears chased each other down his cheeks, exclaiming, “Master, master, I’ve found the Saviour, after all these years !”

“How is the shepherd getting on ?” I asked of the farmer, when I called two years later. He replied, you would not ask if you were to hear the dear old man pray. It’s too far from chapel for the poor people to go twice a day, so I gather them into my kitchen on Sunday evenings. I can’t preach, but I read them one of Spurgeon’s sermons, and the shepherd invariably helps by offering prayer in the service.”

Glad as we are of such results, and we could mention similar ones, ours is especially

THE GOSPEL FOR THE YOUNG.

Their minds have not become warped by prejudice and sin ; they are, therefore, more ready to accept, with unquestioning faith, the simple message of mercy. We had pleasing proof of this, only last week. A child listened eagerly to the message from Acts x. 43 : on her return, she told her mother all she could remember ; and that so accurately, that the mother, who had long been under soul-concern, grasped the truth, rejoiced in liberty, and sent next evening the following request :—“A mother desires you to join her in praise to God that she has found the Saviour.”

Some time since, a little girl furnished me with a text for an address, which has been greatly used of God. She had long attended the Sunday-school, and was now in the senior class. She became deeply convinced of her need of a Saviour. The pastor and I sought to help her by reference to the many “great and precious promises” ; but she could not claim them, and went home broken-hearted. Next day, turning again to the texts we had pointed out, she was enabled, then and there, to believe them for herself, and found “joy and peace through believing.” This came to our knowledge during the afternoon ; hence we were not a little surprised to find her again among the enquirers in the evening. “Annie : I thought you had found the Saviour ?” said the pastor. “Yes, Mr. Smith,” she replied, “so I have ! but I wanted just to tell you how happy I am.” The pastor invited her to call at the manse and see him for further talk, as he wished now to speak to the anxious. Suddenly recalling himself, as she was leaving, he said, “One minute, Annie ; can you tell us how you lost your burden ? it may help some of these who are troubled, as you were last evening.” Simple, but rich in suggestiveness, was her brief reply :—“Please, sir, I went straight to the cross with my burden, and left it there, and came away free !”

During special services in Yorkshire, a dear child, under nine years

of age, yielded her heart to the Saviour. Many people looked somewhat coldly and suspiciously on one of such tender years professing to be saved ; but her subsequent life proved the genuineness of her conversion. Five years later, at work in Yorkshire, I was summoned from the West to the East Riding ; the dear child was "going home," and repeatedly expressed a wish to see me. After her glad greeting, I asked, "Are you in much pain, Lizzie ?" "Yes," she replied, "a great deal at times ; but Jesus is with me in it all. When I was first taken ill, I was scarcely conscious of pain for days, so sweet was the sense of rest I enjoyed in the Saviour's embrace." I turned to Revelation, and read to her of heaven : "Is it not beautiful, Lizzie ?" "Yes," she said, "but it would not be heaven without Jesus." "Why not? All this is delightful! Streets of gold, walls of jasper, gates of pearl!" "Yes," she replied, "*in the light*." "What do you mean?" I asked. "Read the next verse," said the child, "and you will find my meaning—'*the Lamb is the light thereof*.'" Sweet commentary on the Master's words, "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes : even so, Father ; for so it seemed good in thy sight."

We rejoice in the abundant proof that ours is

THE GOSPEL FOR THE VILEST.

Last September, in an open-air service among the hop-pickers, I told the following incident :—There dwelt a man in this neighbourhood who spent nearly all his money in drink. Scarcely ever was he sober when he had a penny to take him inside a public-house. His home was a "little hell upon earth"; his wife went out "charing" to keep the wolf from the door ; and the children were in rags, and half-starved. Four years ago this evening that man, sober because penniless, listened as I spoke on John iii. 16. Deep conviction seized him ; he took to his heels to try to escape from the thoughts that haunted him. Finding this in vain, and ashamed to go home to his poor wife in this mood, he turned into a waggon-lodge a mile from here ; and, behind a waggon, fell on his knees, crying to God for mercy. There he wrestled for two hours, till the light broke in ; he cast himself upon the Saviour, and found peace. Not long after, his wife was brought to the Saviour, too ; their home is now a "little paradise," and children, well-fed and well-clad, attend the Sunday-school.

A little girl listened to this narrative, and, on her return, began to repeat it to her father. He listened to the prattling tongue till unable longer to contain himself ; then, falling on his knees, he cried, "O God, that's me !"

The next evening he came to tell me of this, and to bear testimony to God's faithfulness to him.

In one place I visited, a rather morose, unapproachable sort of man listened, evening after evening. Suspecting that God was at work with him, I called at his shop on Saturday, and found him in a very miserable mood ; he had not slept for several nights, and was looking ill for want of that sleep he was positively afraid to take. I invited him to come to the Sunday-morning prayer-meeting, and commence the

day in right earnest with us. "Come to a seven o'clock Sunday-morning meeting!" said he: "I never did such a thing in my life! Whatever would the people say? Already they are beginning to talk, because I have been each evening to the services." I challenged the man: "What do you care what people say? But three weeks ago you were staggering through this place drunk, and using language that proclaimed you a child of wrath; is it a fact that you are ashamed lest men should think you are seeking to turn to God, and mend your ways?" This was too much for him; he replied, "I don't care what they say." "Then you had better come to the prayer-meeting, or I shall think you *do*; so, in either case, you'll be in the same fix! Moreover, you don't know what a blessing God has in store for you! It may be the meeting-place between the Father and the prodigal." The tear started, as he exclaimed, "I hope so, for I'm tired of this!" He came, and in that morning meeting found Christ. At the close of the day, with a beaming face, he gripped my hand, saying: "I never had such a Sunday in all my life!" Three weeks later, at the College Conference, the minister said, "You should have heard our friend Thomas last night; during a lull in the prayer-meeting, to the astonishment of us all, he began to pray. Before many sentences, he broke down abruptly, thus: 'O Lord, I can't pray yet; I'm only three weeks old. Amen!'"

A man and his wife had lived a very wretched life. More than once (and only a day or two prior to my visit) she had jumped out of the bed-room window, to escape his violence. On the first evening of our mission, I suggested to the Christians that they should each fix upon somebody as a special subject for prayer. It afterwards transpired that several hearts at once, without (human) pre-arrangement, fixed on this man. Next evening he was at the service, and the following evening his wife with him. They continued to come, and a week later his wife called on me to come and see her husband. I found him leaning upon the table, by his untouched meal. "Not at work?" I asked. "No, sir, I can't work, my sins trouble me so." "And have you taken no breakfast?" "No, sir, I feel more like choking! and I haven't slept all night; I'm afraid to go to sleep; my sins are constantly before me." I found congenial work in pointing him to the Saviour, but left him still broken-hearted. A few days later I called, and found him, not jubilant, but calmly resting on Christ. After a brief interview, I was rising from prayer, when he broke out in earnest thanksgiving; and soon he was praying, in endearing terms, for his wife: "O God, bless my *darling wife*; save her, too!" It was many years since the poor woman had heard *such music* from his lips, and it broke her heart. Bursting into tears, she began crying to God for mercy. Presently faith began to bud and grow: "O God, save me, too! Dear Saviour, I *want* to trust thee!" and, ere long it was, "O Saviour, I *can* trust thee! I do trust thee! Blessed be thy name, thou hast saved me, too!" Not long since I heard from them from Australia; they were associated with the Wesleyan Church, the nearest place of worship, and he a local preacher on their "plan." It is a great joy to us when any find Christ, but a peculiar joy when

THEY IN TURN BECOME SOUL-WINNERS.

In the midst of an address I was once interrupted by a fine, intelligent young man, a Board-school teacher, up till then a follower of Bradlaugh, who rose tremblingly before a company of some five hundred of his fellow-townsmen, and, with a beseeching look, that haunts my memory still, said, "Sir, will you please pray for me?" I stopped my address, and could not help saying, before I prayed, "Young man, thou art not far from the kingdom of God." Soon after his conversion, his abilities were turned to good account, and he became an acceptable local preacher, then passed through college, and is now in the ministry.

Though wearied, and late in my arrival in Yorkshire, one Saturday, I could not resist the temptation of going to the prayer-meeting. It was one of the heartiest prayer-meetings I was ever in; but, with one exception save the pastor and myself, all the pleaders were sisters. A gracious work was manifest from the very commencement of the Mission. A number of young men, of which that little church was sadly deficient till then, were brought to the Saviour, and the good pastor's hands thereby considerably strengthened. Among these was a bright young man, also a Board-school teacher, full of promise. Soon he began preaching; has since passed through Manchester College, and in Lancashire to-day he is a useful young minister, of whom (if I mistake not) we shall yet hear great things.

There is an important feature in the Evangelist's work that must not be overlooked. Whilst often useful in gathering under the influence of the gospel those who are comparative strangers to the message, it is pre-eminently successful in bringing the pastor's work to full fruition. In very many cases the Evangelist is the "Reaper" in the field. A long season of earnest toil has been expended in turning the soil, casting in, and watering the seed. By-and-by the "fields are white unto harvest," and the Master, placing the sickle in the reaper's hand, bids him go forth and "gather in the sheaves." And herein is that saying true, "One soweth, and another reapeth." Thus, "both he that soweth, and he that reapeth, may rejoice together."

I have been greatly cheered by the

ABIDING CHARACTER OF THE WORK

in most places. Writing me lately, a minister said, referring to a baptism on the previous Sunday, "You will be pleased to know that this makes forty-three members we have received into the church, who trace their conversion to your visit of three years ago."

An East-end pastor recently observed, "We saw but three cases of conversion whilst you were with us; but have since received into fellowship ten who trace their decision to those services." Last month I paid a flying visit to a scene of former labours; and the sweetest music I then heard, was, "You will be thankful to know that all the friends who found the Saviour, when you were here, are holding well on their way, and walking consistently." Yes, very thankful to hear it. "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."

Report of Evangelistic Work.

BY A. A. HARMER.

IN reporting upon another year's work, one has mingled feelings of joy and sorrow ; joy for all that has been done, sorrow that the all is so little. "Do the work of an Evangelist," is still a command heard and obeyed by a few. It is still needful that there be "some Evangelists and some Pastors," and the Evangelist devoutly hopes that those churches which do not recognize this as a scriptural command will never invite him to work in their midst. The command is from God, and the Evangelist receives his commission from the hands of the King. It means loss of home comforts, much weary travelling, a great strain upon the health ; but it also means a joyful work, the joy of harvest, bringing in the sheaves, and shouting the glad song of harvest home. It is something to be able to help the Pastor, who all the long year or years has been sowing the good seed, and who now, during the visit of the Evangelist, reaps and rejoices with joy unspeakable. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed ; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt"—a beautiful picture of the Pastor and Evangelist working in the same field ; it means a double crop, barren hill-sides brought under cultivation, and difficulties swept away : "And all the hills shall melt." May all his servants know this joy !

In commencing work last April, I visited Totnes for the second time, and letters that I have had from Pastors and converts tell of blessings received. From South Devon I went up to Birmingham, and it was a *hard, hard* time ; but with the help of a band of workers I went out into the market-place, and preached and sang in the open-air, but always invited the people in for a closing meeting. By these means we drew in the outcasts and wretched. We have reason to thank God that one poor girl was taken from the streets, and placed in a comfortable home.

With the help of Mr. Chamberlain, whose services are always greatly valued, I held a Mission in the new chapel at Thornton Heath : this led to continued services whilst Pastor J. W. Harrald was at Mentone. It was a happy time, and a good work was done among the young : the Pastor is helped in his work there by a splendid band of teachers and workers. The church at Beulah chapel has a bright prospect. Again, with the help of dear friend Chamberlain, I went in September to Bradford,—that busy, smoky place, where one ever hears the rattle of machinery and "the clang of the wooden shoon." The people loved the singing of the gospel, and many were charmed by its sound, and led to the Saviour's feet. It was here we met dear Mr. Wood, of Tetley Street, so bright and merry in his work, who, from the midst of the people he loved so well, went right into the presence of his Master, to hear the "Well-done, good and faithful servant."

In writing this report, incidents crowd in so that one can scarcely put them in order ; but I must mention just a few. At South Bermondsey, during a service, I asked for requests for prayer. A woman, who had

been brought in the evening before, rose, and with much emotion, said, "Pray for my husband, he *ought* to give his heart to God, he *must* give his heart to God, because we both promised our dying child that we would meet her in heaven." In the vestry we knelt in prayer with husband and wife, when he surrendered his heart to Christ: they are now both members of the church.

The Evangelist is thrown amongst various classes, and can tell of work among sailors, soldiers, and miners; the latter class not the least interesting because their work is underground. When in the Sheffield district, I was invited to go down into a pit to see the men at "snap" time, and have some talk with them. I accepted the invitation, but when I arrived at a pit bank, I was sorry for it. I found the way down into the pit *painful*: please make your own application. I found the way down into the pit *rapid*, 300 feet in 30 seconds. I found the way down into the pit *dark*: the application is evident. When we arrived at the bottom of the pit, they clothed me in a big overcoat and gave me a safety-lamp, with these instructions: "Keep your head *down* and your light *straight*." I found, by painful experience, what this meant: the great boulders overhead reminded me, and being careless with my light, it went out: again make your own application. "Keep *your* head down, and *your* light straight." I was much struck with the ponies that drew the "tubs" of coal; when they came to a narrow pass, they quite naturally fell upon their knees, and crawled through. I enquired, "Is it not very difficult to train them to this?" "Oh no, we just fasten a rope to their fore legs, and pull when they are to go upon their knees, and down they go." Again the application is evident. If sinners will not come to their knees, the Lord sometimes binds them with a great trouble, or loss, or bereavement, and thus, in the darkness of sorrow, pulls them to their knees.

If space permitted, I should like to tell of my second visit to Orpington, where I had the valuable help of Messrs. Allison and Vinson, and Pastor Scillely. It was a joyful time, and many decided for Christ; but, best of all, we were assured that not one of the converts of last year had fallen. The services at Long Buckby were to us all a blessed season, the closing meeting was a time to be remembered; many of the converts were young men, and will, we trust, prove to be good workers.

The work of the Evangelist is not all success: there are Pastors and Churches which don't seem to understand us; these of course never invite us the second time. I have just commenced at Totnes for the *third* time; Mr. Chamberlain will join me in a few days; the friends are praying for and expecting a great blessing.

May I remind friends that the funds of the Society of Evangelists are sometimes a source of anxiety to our President? This ought not to be; on the contrary, if the Churches visited *would only do their share*, our President would be able to send out several more Evangelists. We thank God for another year's work, and take courage, believing that there is a joyful time before us. "They shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them."

Pastors' College Society of Evangelists.

THROUGH the "Notes," month by month, in the *Sword and Trowel*, we have kept our friends informed concerning the movements of our College Evangelists. It is, therefore, only necessary here to give a list of the places in which our brethren have held special services since our last Annual Report.

Messrs. FULLERTON AND SMITH, during the past year, have visited Middlesbrough, Stockton-on-Tees, St. Albans, Bury St. Edmund's, Stowmarket, Wisbech, Taunton, Weymouth, St. Helier's (Jersey), Cambridge, The Metropolitan Tabernacle, Reading, Pontypridd, Abercarne, Sutton (Surrey), Ampthill, Sutton (Yorkshire), Rotherham, Down Lodge Hall, Wandsworth, Putney, and Northcote Road, Wandsworth Common. From every place we have received most gratifying testimonies of the blessing that has accompanied and followed the Evangelists' labours.

Mr. BURNHAM has related for us some of the incidents that he has met with in his services, so that we need only mention here that, since the last Conference, he has conducted evangelistic meetings at Milton (Oxfordshire), Fivhead, Frampton Mansell (Gloucestershire), Kent (among the hop-pickers), Cranford, Milton (Northamptonshire), Blisworth, Wellington (Shropshire), Winslow, St. Ives, Chalford, Frampton Mansell (second visit during the year), Southend-on-Sea, Chester, Towcester, and Chesham.

Mr. HARMER has also written an account of his work, which appears on another page. His missions during the past year have been held at Totnes, Plymouth, Birmingham, Brentwood, Higham Hill, Rickmansworth, Thornton Heath, Bradford, South Bermondsey, Stroud, Parnell Road, Old Ford, Orpington, Modbury, Newton Abbot, Redditch, Long Buckby, Plumstead, and Totnes (closing the year at the same place as he commenced it).

In addition to these brethren who are wholly supported from the Evangelists' Fund, partial assistance has been rendered to Mr. EYRES, who has now gone to China, in connection with the China Inland Mission; to Mr. PARKER, who is evangelizing in the United States; to Mr. MATEER, who, since his return from Australia with Mr. Parker, has conducted special services in various places with much acceptance, and who desires to settle down to pastoral work, if the Lord shall open the way; to Mr. HILL, who has been much blessed in evangelistic and Gospel Temperance work in London; and to Mr. SNELL, who is seeking to raise a Baptist Church in Guernsey. Mr. E. A. CARTER has also been added to the number of brethren partially dependent upon our funds.

There are abundant opportunities of service for all these Evangelists; and if our means were increased, we could employ even more well-qualified brethren, both at home and abroad.

Summary of Results.

DURING the thirty-two years of our existence as a school of the prophets, seven hundred and sixty-two men, exclusive of those at present studying with us, have been received into the College, "of whom the greater part remain unto this day ; but some (sixty-one) have fallen asleep." Making all deductions, there are now in the work of the Lord, in some department or other of useful service, more than six hundred brethren. Of these, five hundred and sixty-eight are in our own denomination as Pastors, Missionaries, and Evangelists. They may be thus summarized :—

Number of brethren who have been educated in the College...	...	762
„ now in our ranks as Pastors, Missionaries, and Evangelists		568
„ without Pastorates, but regularly engaged in the work of the Lord	... ..	21
„ not now engaged in the work, but useful in secular callings		26
„ Educated for other Denominations	... ..	2
„ Dead—(Pastors, 54 ; Students, 7)	... ..	61
„ Permanently Invalided	... ..	10
„ Names removed from the List for various reasons, such as joining other Denominations, &c.	... ..	74

FORM OF BEQUEST.

I Give and Bequeath the sum of _____ pounds sterling, to be paid out of that part of my personal estate which may by law be given with effect for charitable purposes, to be paid to the Treasurer for the time being of the Pastors' College, Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington, Surrey, and his receipt shall be a sufficient discharge for the said legacy ; and this legacy, when received by such Treasurer to be applied for the general purposes of the College.

PASTORS' COLLEGE.

Account for the Year 1887.

RECEIPTS.			PAYMENTS.		
		£ s. d.			£ s. d.
To Weekly Offerings	...	...	By Salaries	...	1,703 15 10
" Donations	...	...	" Board, Lodging, and Medical Attendance...	...	3,548 2 8
" Legacies	...	...	" Clothing	...	90 3 9
" Collected by Students	...	...	" Lighting, Cleaning, and Warming	...	160 6 5
" Interest on Deposit	...	...	" Books, Printing, Stationery, Bookbinding, Advertising, and Petty expenses	...	228 17 8
			" Book-grants to Students leaving College	...	102 17 9
			" Preaching Stations—Home Missions and Chapels	...	1,056 17 10
			" Annual Conference—including Hire, Labour, and Decorations...	...	356 14 9
			" Furniture and Fittings	...	77 8 0
		6,634 10 0			7,925 4 8
" Balance in hand, 1st January, 1887	...	2,076 10 6	" Balance in hand, 31st December, 1887	...	1,385 15 10
		£8,711 0 6			£8,711 0 6

Examined and found correct, January 24th, 1888.

J. A. SPURGEON,
J. PASSMORE,
W. C. MURRELL,
J. BUSWELL,

Finance Committee.

WILLIAM PAYNE,
H. SMITH,
B. W. CARR,

Auditors.

PASTORS' COLLEGE SOCIETY OF EVANGELISTS.

Account for the Year 1887.

RECEIPTS.		PAYMENTS.	
To Donations ...	£ s. d. 570 3 7	By Salaries of four Evangelists, and part of three others	£ s. d. 920 6 4
" Contributions from Churches visited	... 386 5 2	" Travelling Expenses to and from places visited	... 141 5 2
		" Printing and Stationery	... 17 6 10
" Balance in hand, 1st January, 1887	956 8 9	" Balance in hand, 31st December, 1887	1,108 18 4
	308 19 1		156 9 6
	<u>£1,265 7 10</u>		<u>£1,265 7 10</u>
J. A. SPURGEON, J. PASSMORE, W. C. MURRELL, J. BUSWELL.		Examined and found correct, January 24th, 1888. { WILLIAM PAYNE, H. SMITH, B. W. CARR, } Auditors.	

LOAN BUILDING AND RESERVE FUND.

Account for the Year 1887.

RECEIPTS.		PAYMENTS.	
To Balance in hand, January 1st, 1887	£ s. d. 639 2 10	By Loans to Churches:—	£ s. d.
" Repayment of Loans	1,019 0 9	Ilford	200 0 0
		Sittingbourne	220 0 0
		Sevenoaks	330 0 0
		Wimbleton	500 0 0
		Balance in hand, December 31st, 1887	1,250 0 0
	<u>£1,658 3 7</u>		408 3 7
			<u>£1,658 3 7</u>
Loans outstanding, December 31st, 1887		Examined and found correct, January 24th, 1888. { WILLIAM PAYNE, H. SMITH, B. W. CARR, } Auditors.	
Cash Balance in hand	£ s. d. 4,676 16 9		
	408 3 7		
	<u>£5,085 0 4</u>		

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION.

PASTORS' COLLEGE,

TEMPLE STREET, NEWINGTON,

LONDON, S.E.;

DEAR SIR,

In answer to your enquiries as to the Pastors' College, the following information may be of service :—

The object of this institution is to give further instruction to those who have already proved themselves to be efficient preachers ; young men who wish to be “made into ministers,” but have never preached, are therefore quite ineligible. As we cannot attempt so large a work as the training of men for all denominations, we confine ourselves to such as are connected with those believers called Baptists. Applicants must therefore be baptized persons. None are eligible but believers in the Lord Jesus, members of Christian churches, men of known character and of earnest spirit. Such men, holding what are popularly styled Calvinistic views, and having been more or less constantly engaged in preaching and other evangelistic work for two or more years, are admitted upon showing satisfactory testimonials. Want of education and poverty are no obstacles ; but every one must contribute to the expenses if able to do so. Single men are preferred ; and, as a rule, in the cases of married men, their wives and families must be provided for apart from the College funds. The time of remaining in College is ordinarily two years, but it may be increased to three or even four years at the discretion of the President, where brethren would evidently profit by a longer term : the longer term is growingly preferred. The course of study varies according to each case.

Should it happen that upon reading this paper you perceive that you are disqualified, it will be best not to apply again, as the rules are fixed, and exceptions are very rarely entertained. If, on the other hand, this information encourages you to apply, all further communications should be addressed to Mr. THOMAS PAGE, 92, Newington Butts, London, S.E., who will send you a list of questions to be answered.

Stamps for replies should in all cases be enclosed if an answer is expected.

Yours very truly,

C. H. SPURGEON.

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